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SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

MESSAGES RECEIVED ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

(Issued in accordance with a decision taken by the Special Committee at its 664th meeting, on 22 March 1993)

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I. MESSAGES FROM MEMBER STATES

AFGHANISTAN

Message from Mr. Burnahuddin Rabbani, President of Afghanistan

[Original: English]

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reminds us of the great pain, sufferings and injustices inflicted upon many people as a result of the pursuit of racial policies in some corners of the world.

On this solemn occasion, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, I would like to reaffirm unequivocal support for the endeavours of the United Nations aimed at the total eradication of racism and racial discrimination.

While noting with satisfaction the achievements of the United Nations in this field, it is regrettable to still see one of the most heinous manifestations of racism, namely apartheid, in the southern part of Africa and the abhorrent policy of ethnic cleansing in the country of Bosnia and Herzegovina to which are subject many innocent people.

The Government and people of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, while saluting the Special Committee against Apartheid, renews its commitment to actively take part in international endeavours in its objective to see a world without racism and racial discrimination, a world in which equality, justice and peace prevail irrespective of colour, race, sex or creed.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Message from Mr. V. C. Bird, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda

[Original: English]

On this the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda reiterate our oft-stated condemnation of discriminatory, racist policies and practices wherever they may occur.

As a nation, we adhere firmly to the belief that victims of racial discrimination should rise up and crush the forces of oppression, regardless of the consequences; that nations should provide freedom, equality and security for all citizens - irrespective of race, colour, sex or creed; and that the last vestiges of the evil system of apartheid and other forms of discrimination and domination should be eradicated.

My Government and people welcome the resumption of the negotiating process, aimed at securing consensus on the resumption of full-scale, multi-party constitutional negotiations for a democratic South Africa. Nevertheless, we remain firm in our conviction that until the principles of equality and respect

for human dignity are regarded as fundamental rights for all its citizens, South Africa should be treated as an international pariah.

ARGENTINA

Message from Mr. Guido di Tella, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to reaffirm the rejection by the Government and people of Argentina of any systems based on discrimination or which permit discriminatory measures.

The cultural and political tradition of the Argentine Republic, as reflected in its Constitution, stipulates that all the nation's citizens are equal before the law and does not permit discriminatory practices.

For that reason, the Government of Argentina firmly backs any initiative aimed at the elimination of racial discrimination and reaffirms its unwavering support for the recognition of equality among men, irrespective of their origin, race, ideology or creed. In that connection, the work promoted by the United Nations, particularly through the General Assembly and the Special Committee against Apartheid, is outstanding.

The Argentine Republic adds its voice to the voices of those firmly calling for the speedy elimination, once and for all, of all forms of racial, political or religious discrimination and in turn expresses the hope that the latest events in South Africa are harbingers of a favourable outcome to the constitutional and multi-party negotiations.

BANGLADESH

Message from Mr. Khaledha Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh

[Original: English]

On this solemn occasion of the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I, on behalf of the people and the Government of Bangladesh, wish to reaffirm our unequivocal opposition to and rejection of racism and racial discrimination in all its forms and practices, and particularly its most abhorrent institutionalized manifestation - apartheid.

Apartheid is a crime against human dignity and conscience. The international community has repeatedly voiced its rejection and condemnation of this abhorrent system.

This occasion also coincides with the thirty-third anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre. Today, we pay tribute in memory of the martyred men,

women and children who laid down their lives for the noble cause of emancipation from years of oppression, discrimination, humiliation and injustice.

As we commemorate this occasion today, we are conscious of a new sense of optimism. Epochal changes taking place in South Africa may signal the possibility of an effective breakthrough in the entrenched bastion of apartheid.

The Government of Bangladesh welcomes the recent developments in South Africa and is hopeful that we will soon witness the end of apartheid and the inevitable realization of the long-cherished objective of the people of South Africa to achieve their inalienable national rights for political, social and economic emancipation in a multiracial and democratic South Africa.

BARBADOS

Message from Mr. Maurice A. King, Minister for Foreign of Barbados

[Original: English]

Today, we pause to remember those whose lives were so tragically taken at Sharpeville, South Africa, on 21 March 1960, some 33 years ago, by South African security forces. Their crime was to demand justice and equality from an unjust and racist system. In recognition of their bravery and just cause, the United Nations in October 1965 memorialized their actions by proclaiming 21 March International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Today we note the gains that have been made towards respect for basic human rights in South Africa. This has been due in no small measure to consistent pressure by the world community in various areas, and by the unrelenting internal pressure from Black South Africans to bring the racist regime to the realization that the majority of that country's people cannot be disenfranchised indefinitely.

Change has begun - change which we hope is irreversible. Resolute opposition, however, to all obstacles to the process must be maintained. There must be no doubt that nothing less than respect for and observance of the rights of all South Africans will be acceptable.

Barbados has with most of the world encouraged the new thinking in South Africa by renewing contacts at the sporting level with that country, and last year Barbados played host to a South African cricket team. Expanding contacts with South Africa, however, will depend on that country's demonstration of its commitment to freedom, justice and liberty.

While the institutionalized racism of South Africa has been unparalleled anywhere in the world - since the Second World War - the spectre of racism seems to be raising its ugly head elsewhere, even as it appears to diminish in South Africa. It is now seen in some of the most advanced nations, in the treatment of their indigenous peoples. Minority groups are being targeted as their human rights and fundamental freedoms are disregarded and they become relegated to being second-class citizens on account of their race, colour and ethnic origin.

Other nations allow the disease of racism to contaminate the society through the dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority, hatred and prejudice. Terms such as "ethnic cleansing" and "social cleansing" threaten to become fashionable. These practices must not go uncondemned.

The consequences of racism are far-reaching. Its practice is one of the major and underlying causes of the world refugee problem, of mal-distribution of the Earth's resources and of an economic order in which millions of lives are circumscribed by a vicious cycle of poverty. A society which omits from its mainstream entire communities because of their race or ethnic origin is of necessity an impoverished society. The unfortunate relationship between race and poverty exists, and unless the situation improves, it will seriously undermine all efforts for world stability and harmony.

Barbados believes that only when every individual is respected as a fellow human being without regard to his or her race, colour or ethnic origin, can there be peace and justice. We believe that eventually the multiracial composition of our societies will heighten the awareness that racism must be eradicated. We have confidence that eventually societies will put behind them retrogressive ways of thinking as consciousness is raised based on respect for the rights of each man, woman and child and respect for our environment.

I take this opportunity to reiterate my country's deep commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to join that Organization in calling for the establishment of a non-racial democratic society in South Africa.

BRAZIL

Message from the Government of Brazil

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Brazilian Government reaffirms once against its firm condemnation of racial discrimination in all its forms, and especially of the apartheid system, and its full commitment to the upholding of the fundamental principle of equality of all men and women irrespective of their race.

The Brazilian Government reiterates its hope that the negotiations currently being held in South Africa will lead to the completion of the process of dismantling, at the shortest possible term, the hideous system of apartheid, allowing all South Africans finally to live in peace and to enjoy prosperity and social justice in a free, democratic and non-racial country.

The Brazilian Government also expresses its continuing concern with what seems to be a pattern of growing racial intolerance and xenophobia in other regions of the world. It hopes that today's celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination may also serve as a day of deep reflection on ways to reverse this worrying phenomenon.

BURKINA FASO

Message from Mr. Thomas Sanon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso

[Original: French]

The observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination comes at a time when glimmers of hope have appeared on the South African political landscape. Indeed, more than 10 months after the breakdown of the constitutional negotiations, the main political actors of South Africa will meet to resume the discussions.

However, in the light of the sad events of the past year, we have to exercise considerable caution. The international community will have noted contrasting trends in achievements in South Africa. The repugnant and inhuman system of apartheid is as vigorous as ever. Violence is a recurring theme in the daily existence of the people of South Africa. The refusal of the authorities to control it discredits the progress achieved and undermines the constitutional process which the majority of South Africans are ardently yearning for.

That is why on 21 March, the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, the international community must renew its commitment to the valiant people of South Africa and reaffirm its conviction that pressure against the Pretoria regime must be maintained until apartheid collapses.

The people of Burkina Faso will support the South African people until the Black majority which has been deprived of its fundamental rights recovers its freedom and dignity. The people of Burkina Faso are convinced that the Black majority will be able to defeat the odious system of apartheid and establish a united, multiracial and democratic South Africa.

CHILE

Message from Mr. Enrique Silva Cimma, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of yet another observance of such an important event as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to convey to you, on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Patricio Aylwin Azócar, President of the Republic of Chile and his Government, special greetings for the noble cause that the Committee, which you so ably preside over, defends. I would also like to reiterate my country's unwavering commitment to the international community in its efforts to achieve the total elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, especially apartheid.

In conveying my sincere wishes for the success of your chairmanship and of the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid, I also take this opportunity to convey to you the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

CHINA

Message from Mr. Li Peng, Premier of the State Council of China

[Original: Chinese]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to express, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, our solidarity and support to the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid. Over the past year, you have led the Special Committee in a common, unremitting effort in support of the South African people together with the justice-upholding forces of the international community to bring about an early eradication of racial discrimination and apartheid. This has won our appreciation and commendation.

The system of racial discrimination and apartheid in South Africa, which has long outrageously infringed upon and deprived the vast Black population of their basic rights, has met with the firm opposition of the South African people and world-wide condemnation. Over the past two years, some positive changes have taken place in South Africa, and the South African Government has taken some major reform measures, marking a good beginning of a political settlement to the South African question. It should be noted, however, that the apartheid system is yet to be fully eradicated and the Black population are still denied their lawful rights. We hold that the key to a political settlement of the South African question lies in an early resumption of the constitutional talks and elimination of violent conflicts. To this end, the South African Government should take up the responsibility of putting an end to violent conflicts with a view to creating an atmosphere and conditions necessary for the resumption of the democratic process. As the democratic process in South Africa is now at a crucial juncture, the international community should continue its efforts in urging the South African Government to take earnest steps aimed at accelerating the political settlement of the South African question.

The Chinese Government and people will, as always, firmly support the South African people in their just struggle against racism and are ready to join the international community in exerting positive efforts for the early establishment of a new South Africa of unity, democracy and racial equality.

CYPRUS

Message from Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President of Cyprus

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, we recall that the struggle against racism and discrimination still continues today.

Even after the great tragedies produced by racial discrimination in this century, certain manifestations of racism are still crucial issues on the international agenda.

The legislative pillars of the abhorrent system of apartheid are in the process of being abolished in South Africa, but to undo the legacy of apartheid will be a continuing task requiring continued scrutiny by the international community.

The past year has seen recourse to the evil practice of ethnic cleansing, of which we in Cyprus have such bitter experience. This is a sad reminder that the emotions of racism, xenophobia, extreme nationalism are a threat against which every society must be vigilant.

On this day, we renew our commitment to the values of equality and solidarity among peoples and we reaffirm our determination to work for the elimination of discrimination and racial bias world wide.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Message from Mr. Josef Zieleniec, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

[Original: English]

The Czech Republic has welcomed the opportunity provided to it by the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, declared by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 2142 (XXI) of 21 October 1966 to commemorate the victims of Sharpeville, to fully associate itself with its objectives.

On this occasion, we appreciate particularly the active efforts exerted by the United Nations, which has always stood for protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, in accordance with its Charter, committing us to reaffirm our faith in the dignity and worth of human beings and the equality of men and women and of nations large and small.

Despite considerable efforts undertaken by the international community, which have led to tangible progress in promoting freedom across the world, socio-economic inequalities still persist on a global scale, as well as crimes based on racial hatred, of which the most serious are all forms of institutionalized racism.

The Czech Republic, loyal to all good traditions of ancient Czech statehood as well as Czechoslovak statehood, is ready to build, protect and develop, in accordance with its Constitution, the independent Czech State in the spirit of inviolable values of human dignity and freedom as the home of equal, free citizens.

Freedom, peace and justice are indivisible, especially at a time when our world is becoming smaller and is bound by shared values and the need to coexist in harmony. Let us therefore intensify our efforts to eradicate all forms of racial discrimination, since the protection of human dignity is a responsibility shared by all of us. The Czech Republic is ready to spare no effort to reach these noble ideals.

DENMARK

Message by the European Community and its member States

[Original: English]

The Community and its member States have always supported efforts to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination. We regard racial discrimination as an intolerable violation of fundamental human rights, totally incompatible with the relevant principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments in the field of human rights. It denies the principles of dignity and equality inherent to all human beings.

The Community and its member States continue to express their resolute opposition to any form of discrimination, whether based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. Such manifestations of racism must be ended, as called for in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

We have welcomed - and support - the General Assembly's declaration last year of a decade to combat racism. We welcome the decision of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights to appoint a new Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance, which we hope will help the international community improve its strategies to combat racism in all its forms world wide. In this context the resolution of the Commission underlines the fundamental difference between racism and institutionalized governmental policy, such as apartheid, and other manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance taking place in segments of many societies.

As far as the situation in South Africa is concerned, the objective of the Community and its member States remains the complete dismantling of apartheid and the establishment of a free and democratic society in which all South Africans will enjoy equal rights. We therefore welcome the progress achieved in the negotiating process, which was initiated by the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), and note with satisfaction that on 6 March 1993 the participants in the Multi-party Planning Conference committed themselves to the resumption of multi-party constitutional negotiations by 5 April 1993.

This negotiating process is a unique opportunity for the peaceful transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic and non-racial State and its full integration into the international community. Hopefully, the process will lead to an early establishment of a transitional arrangement and the holding of free elections for a constituent assembly.

GHANA

Message from President Jerry John Rawlings, Head of State of Ghana

[Original: English]

1. On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish on behalf of the people and Government of Ghana, and on my own behalf, to express our appreciation of the efforts of the international community to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination which are an affront to the dignity and worth of the human person.

2. This day 21 March, recalling as it does the Sharpeville massacre 33 years ago when the police of the apartheid regime of South Africa, in an act of cowardice, fired on Black South Africans who were holding a peaceful demonstration against the dehumanizing pass laws, is an important landmark in the history of all peoples who suffer racism and racial discrimination. The commemoration of the Sharpeville massacre presents the international community with an opportunity to rededicate itself to the struggle for the elimination of the twin evils of racism and racial discrimination, and thus pay tribute to the memory of the 69 persons who were murdered at Sharpeville and the many more who suffered injury.

3. Thirty-three years on, the blood shed by the men and women who launched the struggle against the bankrupt system of apartheid continues to remind us of our obligation to pursue and sustain the momentum of the struggle until the complete demise of apartheid. While we remain encouraged by the current negotiating process, the international community should not allow itself to be lulled into complacency and a false sense of security. The task ahead is arduous and the road to a democratic, non-racial society in South Africa remains difficult.

4. To the peace-loving people of Ghana who cherish the right of all peoples to freedom, justice and equality, the determination of human relations on the basis of race, ethnicity, creed, religion or sex remains unacceptable and indefensible. South Africa cannot isolate itself from the democratic ethos which has become the benchmark of relations among nations.

5. We call for the unconditional release of Black South Africans still languishing in South African prisons. We call for racial tolerance and understanding among all the parties concerned in the negotiating process. We urge that the repressive machinery of apartheid should not be replaced by a system which provides encouragement and support for continued violence. Safeguarding the lives of all South Africans remains a sacred obligation.

6. The people and Government of Ghana wish to express our unflinching support for, and solidarity with, our brothers and sisters in South Africa in their legitimate struggle against apartheid. We salute the gallant men and women who have laid down their lives in the struggle for a just, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

7. We applaud the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid in its endeavour to contribute to international peace and security through the

concerted efforts of the international community to eradicate racism and racial discrimination.

GUINEA

Message from General Lansana Conte, President of Guinea

[Original: French]

As in other years, the international community is going to celebrate yet another International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It gives me an opportunity to reaffirm to you the considerable importance that the Guinean people and Government attach to this important event which has transcended the borders of South Africa and has become a common concern of mankind. My country would like to proclaim, even more forcefully than in the past, its faith in the equality of all men and all women in South Africa as an essential condition that will permit the replacement of the shameful policy of apartheid by a system that is based on non-racial and constitutional democracy. In that connection, the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa constitutes the ideal framework for speeding up the negotiations on a new constitution to permit the establishment of a non-racial and democratic society in South Africa. Rest assured that my country, as a member of the Special Committee against Apartheid, stands ready at any moment to make its modest contribution to the achievement of this vision of a new South Africa freed forever from any form of racial discrimination.

GUYANA

Message from the Government of Guyana

[Original: English]

The observance this year of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination organized by the Special Committee against Apartheid is taking place amidst growing incidents of intolerance and discrimination which are manifested by violent upheavals in many parts of the world. The opportunity provided by today's observance is one which should be used to express in the strongest terms the incompatibility of this increasing phenomenon with universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms.

On this occasion the Government of Guyana wishes to express its concern at the growing incidents of intolerance within and among various communities and to urge that dialogue, understanding and compassion be the hallmarks of the relations among communities.

The Special Committee against Apartheid, through its long and steady efforts in combating racism in South Africa, has played a crucial role in achieving the current levels of understanding in South Africa and no doubt will continue to work for the goals of human respect and the rights of the majority of people of South Africa.

The Government of Guyana believes, however, that the international community cannot be heedless to growing intolerance in other parts of the world and will continue to lend its voice and support to all efforts towards the elimination of racial discrimination within the United Nations and other forums.

INDIA

Message from Mr. Dinesh Singh, Minister for External Affairs of India

[Original: English]

The international community is observing this year once again the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Government and the people of India join other nations in reiterating their unstinting support to the elimination of racial discrimination in South Africa.

India has always been in the forefront of the struggle against apartheid. India was the first country to inscribe the issue of apartheid on the agenda of the United Nations and was influential in the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa. Over the years, we have given considerable material, moral and political support to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.

Many significant developments are taking place in South Africa which give us reason to believe that the day is not far when we shall see this worst curse on humanity eliminated from the face of the Earth. Multi-party negotiations are likely to commence next month which shall decide the future of South Africa. There is now a real expectation of the first phase of the all-representative interim government coming into place in the next few months. The entire international community must extend its helping hand for an early realization of a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

INDONESIA

Message from Mr. Soeharto, President of Indonesia

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to express on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Indonesia our unremitting support for the just struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa in achieving justice, freedom and equality.

As we pay homage to the martyrs of Sharpeville, the tides of change that are sweeping across the country have given rise to cautious optimism.

The valiant leaders of the Black majority have demonstrated beyond doubt their determination to negotiate for peaceful change with the Pretoria regime under the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa. In a historic declaration of intent, the participants solemnly committed themselves

to seek transitional arrangements on the provisions for a new constitution and the reincorporation of the so-called homelands, leading to the establishment of an undivided South Africa free forever from the scourge of apartheid. It was also encouraging to note the results of the all-White referendum that supported the process of change.

However, we must not allow these positive developments to obscure the unstable situation in South Africa where the leaders of the majority had to suspend negotiations due to the outbreak of political violence. We were appalled last year by the gruesome massacres at Boipatong and Ciskei. Evoking the memory of Sharpeville at this time is profoundly more saddening as the same brutal and repressive evils of the apartheid system are responsible for the indiscriminate killings of thousands of innocent men, women and children. In fact, the past year was one of the worst in the annals of the tragic history in that strife-torn country. The failure of the racist regime to take effective action to curb the escalating violence and impose appropriate measures to control the criminal conduct of its own security forces has shaken the confidence of the Black population and deepened mistrust and suspicion. In this respect, Indonesia has supported relevant Security Council resolutions and welcomed the deployment of United Nations observers and the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special Envoy to assist in the implementation of the National Peace Accord and thereby create a climate conducive to peaceful negotiations.

Despite these setbacks, talks were resumed in September 1992 and a compromise was reached last month by the parties on an interim power-sharing agreement. Our hopes were further bolstered by the announcement that the leaders of various liberation movements will participate in the forthcoming multi-party planning conference.

It should be recalled that at the Jakarta Summit, the Movement of Non-aligned Countries cautioned against the premature restoration of full-fledged economic and political relations with the Pretoria regime and underscored the need for concerted action by the international community so that the necessary pressures would continue to be exerted on South Africa until a profoundly irreversible stage is reached in the process of negotiations aimed at establishing a democratic and non-racial South Africa. In this regard, only the establishment of an interim government/transitional authority charged with the holding of free and fair elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage will lead to the total and complete eradication of racial discrimination.

Indonesia remains confident that the South African people will emerge triumphant in their struggle leading to the establishment of a racially harmonious society.

JAMAICA

Message from the Government of Jamaica

[Original: English]

This year, as we join the Special Committee against Apartheid in commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, we are encouraged by the further progress towards the building of a new South Africa which has been made in recent weeks. Indeed, this gives rise to optimism that a democratic and non-racial society will be established in South Africa before the end of this century.

Of signal importance was the holding of the Multi-Party Planning Conference held at Kempton Park in South Africa, on 5 and 6 March, which was attended by political parties and movements which had not previously participated in the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), and the decision of the Conference to resume the negotiating process by 5 April of this year. This development we take to be an indication that all South Africa's political organizations, with the exception of the Conservative Party, are now committed to the peaceful transformation of South African society by means of negotiations. The continuing violence in South Africa has been a very serious threat to the process of change. The Government of Jamaica, therefore, welcomes the presence of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) under the capable leadership of a Jamaican national, Ms. Angela King. We also fully support the Secretary-General's decision to increase UNOMSA's manpower.

The violence in South Africa can only be effectively ended by South Africans themselves, and to this end we welcome the efforts being made to convene a meeting between the President of the African National Congress (ANC) and the President of the Inkatha Freedom Party, Chief Mangosutu Buthelezi.

The Government and people of Jamaica continue to observe closely the situation in South Africa and to give full support to the process of change in that country which will, we hope, see the majority of South Africa's population, Black South Africans, assume their proper place in their homeland. We continue to call upon the international community to maintain its vigilance as we all look, hopefully, to the convening of the new round of constitutional negotiations.

As we contemplate the end of the world's most blatant system of racial discrimination, it is with regret that we note the re-emergence of forms of discrimination and xenophobia in other parts of the world directed against minorities, indigenous groups, immigrants and migrant workers. Discrimination against such vulnerable groups is aggravated by ethnic, cultural and religious differences and is further heightened by the phenomenon of mass movements of people caused by conflict, human rights abuses and poverty. It is, therefore, the hope of the Government of Jamaica that these continuing trends of racism and racial discrimination, and their various causes, will be seriously addressed at the World Conference on Human Rights in June. Such manifestations of racism are gross violations of human rights and human dignity and threaten all our goals of a humane, equitable and peaceful world.

As we join with the Special Committee against Apartheid in commemorating this day, we urge the United Nations to continue its vigilance in the fight against apartheid and racial discrimination wherever it may occur.

JORDAN

Message from His Majesty King Hussein Bin Talal, King of Jordan

[Original: Arabic]

The observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination demonstrates the commitment of the international community to combating this odious policy and continuing joint action for a world which is free from any aspect of discrimination and from practices based on differences of colour, race, language or belief, and where equality, justice and peace prevail. I express my appreciation to the Special Committee against Apartheid for its pioneering fight and its earnest efforts to combat racism and eradicate its institutional aspect, represented in the apartheid policy in South Africa. On behalf of the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and its Government, and on my own behalf, I reiterate our continued endorsement and support for all international efforts aimed at eliminating all forms of racial intolerance and racial discrimination.

Based on our deep-rooted conviction that racism is a crime against humanity and human dignity, this position is consistent with the tolerant principles and teachings of Islam, which have instilled in the conscience of the Jordanian people and the Arab nation a spirit of tolerance, brotherhood and the notion of equality between races, peoples and different cultures in accordance with the words of God that "Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most godfearing of you".

Your observance of the occasion comes at a time when the principles of democracy and human rights are taking root and when hopes are growing that the end of the apartheid system in South Africa is nigh. However, this feeling of optimism is tainted by distressing incidents and other abhorrent practices which are essentially no different from forms of racial discrimination such as racial and national intolerance and fanaticism.

The situation in South Africa is unique and extraordinary in terms of the monopoly of authority and power held by the white minority and used against the oppressed Black minority, who are people of the same nation. Today, however, shameful practices are carried out by a majority that continues to discriminate against and to persecute the minority, primarily by means of ethnic cleansing policies, which have been condemned and rejected by the international community.

The radical changes which have occurred in the international arena, the struggle of the South African people, and the serious and timely efforts of the United Nations to combat the policy of apartheid by regarding it as a crime against humanity herald a new dawn, represented by the complete elimination of racial discrimination, in which South Africa may become a unified State and a non-racial democracy, a peace-loving country which is eager to cooperate with its neighbours and which strives to achieve stability in the region.

The developments and positive steps seen in South Africa since 1990 towards abandoning the apartheid system, whether those adopted by the official authorities or those supported by the broad base of the South African people, have created a political climate conducive to the success of the national dialogue and the current talks between the sides to create a unified, democratic and non-racial society. We welcome such positive developments, which compel the international community to continue efforts to accelerate the political settlement and give impetus to the negotiation process, which we trust will continue until it achieves the high objectives desired.

We hope that the defeat of racism in one place will lead to its decline elsewhere. However, such hopes are numbed when we see the policies and crimes being carried out by Israel against the Palestinian people suffering under occupation in a manner inconsistent with the fourth Geneva Convention relating to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

Perhaps the most glaring example of Israeli repression is the uprooting and expulsion from their soil of 400 Palestinians, which created enormous difficulties with regard to the current peace process and the potential for peaceful coexistence, moderation and tolerance in the region. Principles are principles, and to overlook aggression and racism in one place is to encourage them everywhere. Selectivity not only undermines determination, faith and the will to work for a better world where peace, cooperation and moderation prevail; it also damages the credibility of institutions which embrace joint international action.

In conclusion, I wish you success in your efforts and applaud your struggle, which must be a source of strength for the other organizations and committees active in combating aggression, intolerance and human rights violations.

LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

Message from Mr. Muhammed Al-Bishari, Secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation

[Original: Arabic]

The objective of eliminating racism and racial discrimination is a priority of the United Nations, and the General Assembly Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in South Africa, adopted by consensus, is regarded as an important turning-point. Through this Declaration, the international community clearly states its positive determination to eliminate the apartheid regime and establish a united democratic South Africa free of discrimination. The annual observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination affords the international community the opportunity to reiterate its position with respect to racism, racial discrimination and efforts to eliminate those two phenomena.

Our observance of this occasion, which coincides with the thirty-third anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, provides a further opportunity to

review developments in South Africa and the action required to bring a swift end to the system of discrimination there. In this context, it is notable that, over the past two years, South Africa has witnessed successive developments which have shown that the long struggle of the South African people has begun to bear fruit. Most of the racist laws have been abolished, a large number of political prisoners have been released, numerous exiles have been able to return and more than one meeting has taken place between representatives of the racist regime and the democratic forces opposed to it.

These and other developments, such as the start of negotiations in the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) have increased hopes that the policy of apartheid is coming to an end. However, it should not be forgotten that obstacles still remain to producing a climate conducive to free and full political activity and that the situation in South Africa in general is still marred by tension. The outbreak of acts of violence, such as those which occurred last June, the alarming escalation of those acts and the consequent suspension of the negotiation process clearly demonstrate the fragility of the situation in South Africa and the imperative need to continue combined international efforts to produce the circumstances under which the new South Africa can be established. Here, it should be pointed out that the measures taken by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and other organizations are a timely step, since the presence in South Africa of observers from those organizations allays the severity of the political tension and strengthens the structures established under the National Peace Accord.

The outcome of the developments witnessed in South Africa since 1991 is one stage in a process which is not yet complete. The racist regime is still in place and has not yet succeeded in establishing a democratic non-racist South Africa. In order to do so, the international community, which undertook to eliminate fully the apartheid regime, must continue all efforts and action to destroy all obstacles which stand in the way of fulfilling that objective. The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which has always stood by the people of South Africa in its struggle for the restoration of its fundamental rights and remained determined to participate in every event designed to marshal support for the attainment of those rights, today once again reaffirms that it will continue firmly to back the struggle of the South African people and will endorse all international efforts and measures aimed at removing every manifestation of the discrimination practised against it and at promoting the establishment of a democratic South Africa.

Finally, let me not fail on this occasion to commend the Special Committee against Apartheid, both for its continued determination to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and for its role in the efforts of the United Nations and the international community to eliminate racism and racial discrimination.

MALAYSIA

Message from Mr. Mahathir bin Mohamed, Prime Minister of Malaysia

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the people and Government of Malaysia wish to reaffirm their support to the struggle of the people of South Africa against racism and racial discrimination.

The people of South Africa have suffered for far too long under the system of apartheid which has deprived a majority of South Africans of their fundamental human rights. The international community has over the years been committed in pursuing efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. These efforts are becoming particularly important as we approach the final stages of eliminating the system of apartheid.

The people and Government of Malaysia are greatly encouraged by the positive developments that are taking place in South Africa, particularly with regard to the readiness of various political parties in South Africa to meet on 5 and 6 March 1993, to prepare the groundwork for the resumption of multi-party constitutional talks. We note with satisfaction that efforts are under way to establish a Transitional Executive Council. Malaysia fully supports all courses of action that would lead to reconciliation and accommodation within the framework of constructive dialogue and the revival of the CODESA process. Malaysia joins the international community in reasserting the position that these developments will accelerate the process towards the realization of a democratic and non-racial society in South Africa in the near future. The installation of a democratic and non-racial Government in South Africa is crucial and an important requisite towards securing the full respect of human rights and dignity for all to finally eliminate apartheid.

The people and Government of Malaysia commend the Special Committee against Apartheid for its indefatigable efforts, playing a very important role in the struggle of the United Nations and the international community to eliminate racism and racial discrimination.

NIGERIA

Message from General Ibrahim B. Babangida, President of Nigeria

[Original: English]

On behalf of the Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and on my own behalf, I send you this warm message of solidarity as your Committee once again observes this important International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Since the unfortunate Sharpeville massacre of the early 1960s, the international community has become involved, on annual basis, in the commemoration, for those who sacrificed their lives and freedom not only in Sharpeville, but elsewhere, for a new South Africa.

We believe that the recent resumption of the preparatory meeting aimed at jump-starting the multi-party negotiations is a demonstration that most South Africans are now prepared to work for peace and to engage each other in honest dialogue for the political settlement of their country. We wish all the South Africans well in this difficult time and pray that the genuine efforts they bring to bear on this process produces lasting peace which will ensure that the sacrifices of thousands of South Africans were not in vain. As always, Nigeria will continue to play its own role in bringing together the major political leaders in South Africa to provide for a climate of enduring cooperation and political tolerance, which are badly needed for the success of the ongoing process.

Once again, on behalf of the Government and people of Nigeria, accept our warm congratulations for the role your Committee has constantly played in keeping the international community seized of developments inside South Africa.

PAKISTAN

Message from Mr. Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government and the people of Pakistan reaffirm their solemn support for the legitimate aspirations of the people of South Africa for the establishment of a democratic, multiracial society which would ensure freedom and dignity for every one. On this day, 33 years ago, a group of brave men and women sacrificed their lives because they refused to live a life of indignity and humiliation. The massacre at Sharpeville will forever shine as a beacon of light for peoples struggling for self-respect and dignity around the world.

Pakistan has been a consistent foe of apartheid and amongst the first to condemn this inhuman creed. Guided by Islamic injunctions, we have been in the forefront of international efforts to ensure its complete eradication and were one of the first States to sign and ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

The sacrifices of the martyrs of Sharpeville have not gone in vain. The march towards the conclusive elimination of apartheid has now entered its last phase. South Africa today stands on the threshold of a new era. Pakistan welcomes the success achieved in the negotiations for the establishment of a transitional government and hopes that elections to a Constituent Assembly will be held soon. The statesmanship displayed by all political figures in South Africa, particularly by Dr. Nelson Mandela and President de Klerk, offers the promise of a democratic and multiracial society freed from the odium of racial discrimination.

Pakistan looks forward to South Africa's full participation in world affairs as a great and progressive African State and an important member of the comity of nations.

PANAMA

Message from Mr. Julio E. Linares, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Panama

[Original: Spanish]

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, on behalf of the Panamanian Government and people, sends fraternal greetings to the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Institutionalized racism and racial discrimination are among the most serious violations of human rights in the world today.

The Republic of Panama, aware of its responsibility as an integral and active member of the international community and in conformity with its principles of foreign policy, once again renews its solidarity with and firm and continuing support for the masses oppressed by racism. In that connection, the Government of Panama, concerned over the situation of millions of human beings who are still victims of various forms of racism, reaffirms its backing for any measures adopted by the international community with a view to the total eradication of this scourge and of all forms of racial discrimination.

The Republic of Panama notes with satisfaction the efforts made by the South African Government in establishing more democratic measures designed to eliminate racial discrimination and urges all Governments to support and adopt immediate and effective policies in order to combat racism and all forms of racial discrimination.

The Republic of Panama thus expresses the hope that the new century will usher in brighter prospects for progress and freedom for all the world's inhabitants in a climate free from discrimination based on race, colour, creed, political or religious beliefs.

PERU

Message from Mr. Oscar de la Puente Raygada, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government of Peru, in its solidarity with the cause of peoples seeking equality and democracy, rejects any form of racial discrimination and welcomes the significant progress made towards abolishing apartheid.

Peru reaffirms its hope that these actions will lead, as soon as possible, to the advent of a just, egalitarian and non-racial society within a framework of broad and peaceful dialogue.

SENEGAL

Message from Mr. Abdou Diof, President of Senegal

[Original: French]

The occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination once again offers me an opportunity to pay tribute to your Committee on behalf of Senegal for the remarkable work it is doing to focus the continuous attention of the international community on that tragedy of the twentieth century taking place in South Africa and known as apartheid.

The Sharpeville massacre which shook the world's conscience 33 years ago and led to the commemoration of this day, provided proof, if ever any was needed, of the scorn that one human being can hold for another because of the colour of his skin.

As a nation that respects human rights and the principles of the United Nations Charter, Senegal has always striven for the eradication of this human heresy which constitutes an open wound on the body of the international community.

It is also in the context of respect for the provisions of the United Nations Charter that Senegal has consistently called for the initiation of a dialogue in South Africa, which has been and remains the only path to a lasting solution of the South African problem.

Recent developments in that direction that have caused the international community to hold its breath are reassuring to me on a number of levels. Senegal's ardent hope is that the multi-party negotiations which are to begin in early April will result in durable agreements that are acceptable to all parties.

Despite the important concessions that have been made in response to pressure from the international community, violence - the principal obstacle to the establishment of a climate of trust between the various parties - still persists.

The daily massacre of innocent victims, most of them Blacks, is not happening by chance. It is being carried out by skilfully organized groups that do not hesitate to use whatever means are available to undermine any negotiations that could lead to peace in South Africa.

For its part, Senegal is convinced that the day is not far off when the people of South Africa will have made peace with one another and will realize their noble aspirations for peace, democracy and justice thanks to the good will, clear-sightedness and political courage of all active forces in the country.

The best way to commemorate the martyrs of the Sharpeville massacre, and through them, all the sons and daughters of South Africa who have given their

lives to the struggle against apartheid, would be to support the establishment of a non-racial, free, egalitarian and democratic society in South Africa.

The international community should strengthen its support for the democratic process under way in South Africa in order to help that country to carry on as it follows its chosen course towards the eradication of apartheid and the creation of a State based on the rule of law, freedom and justice, free of all racial or ethnic prejudice.

SOUTH AFRICA

Message from Mr. R. F. Botha, Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa

[Original: English]

The South African Government wishes, once again, to express its solidarity with the objectives of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

In my statement last year, I elaborated on the Declaration of Intent adopted on 21 December 1991 by the South African Government delegation and 16 other participants in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). In accordance with the Declaration, the Government committed itself to the objective of bringing about an undivided South Africa pursuing freedom, equality and security for all - irrespective of race, colour, sex or creed; a country free from apartheid and other forms of discrimination and domination.

The South African Government remains firmly committed to this objective.

The Government's political will and determination is demonstrated by its persistent efforts, despite setbacks which caused a hiatus in negotiations during the latter part of last year, to revive the multi-party negotiation process.

I am pleased to announce that the negotiating process is now back on track. As you are aware, a Multi-party Planning Conference, aimed at securing consensus on the resumption of full-scale, multi-party constitutional negotiations, was held at Kempton Park, South Africa, on 5 and 6 March 1993. The Multi-party Planning Conference, attended by 26 delegations representing the full spectrum of political parties and organizations in South Africa, adopted on 6 March 1993 a resolution in accordance with which:

- The participants committed themselves, individually and collectively, to the resumption of multi-party constitutional negotiations within the next month; and

- It was agreed that the multi-party forum shall be reconvened, as a matter of national urgency, not later than 5 April 1993.

The text of the resolution, adopted unanimously, with the exception of the Conservative Party, is attached (see annex to the present message).

The significance of this development is twofold:

- Political parties and movements, which did not previously participate in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), attended the Multi-party Planning Conference, thus ensuring that the principle of inclusiveness, basic to the negotiation process, is promoted;

- The decision to resume multi-party negotiations by 5 April 1993 is in step with the timetable for the transitional process announced by State President de Klerk on 26 November 1992, which envisaged the resumption of the multi-party forum by the end of March 1993.

According to the timetable for the transitional process to which the Government has publicly committed itself, the following target dates are envisaged:

- Multilateral agreements on a Transitional Constitution, including constitution-making procedures, constitutional principles and regional governments, the Transitional Executive Council and an Election Commission be concluded before the end of May 1993;

- The Transitional Executive Council and Election Commission to be instituted before the end of June 1993;

- The Transitional Constitution, providing for a constitution-making body, be enacted before the end of September 1993;

- Election rules and regulations be formulated and promulgated before the end of October 1993;

- Elections for a Constituent Assembly/Constitution-making Body be conducted not later than April 1994.

PROPOSED CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

The South African Government on 2 February 1993 published proposals on a Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The proposals were published to stimulate the debate on human rights and to serve as a basis for negotiations on the contents of a bill of rights. Through this action the Government has demonstrated that it is committed to a new constitutional order in which the rights of the citizen are protected against the arbitrary and discriminatory abuse of political power.

The Government believes that a Charter of Fundamental Rights must be one of the most important elements of the new constitutional system. The provisions of the draft Charter are the Government's proposals of what should be contained in a comprehensive Charter of Fundamental Rights. It should not, however, be seen as the Government's final proposals.

The Government strongly believes that a negotiated Charter of Fundamental Rights must already be in place during the transitional phase.

Of particular interest to this forum are the following provisions:

- The State shall in its legislative, executive and judicial acts respect and protect the human dignity of every person;

- All persons shall be equal before the law and entitled to equal protection by the law;

- No person shall be favoured or prejudiced solely by reason of race, colour, language, sex, religion, ethnic origin, social class, birth, political or other convictions, or disabilities or other natural characteristics.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

To further strengthen the move towards the observance of human rights and the ending of discrimination in South Africa, the South African Government signed, or accede to, the following international instruments on 29 January 1993:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

- Convention on Political Rights of Women;

- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

- Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages;

- Convention on the Nationality of Married Women;

- Convention on the Rights of the Child.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION: WOMEN'S RIGHTS

With a view to enacting the international instruments on women into South African law, the Government recently published draft legislation for the protection of the rights of women, thereby inviting public comment.

The three draft bills are:

- The Prevention of Domestic Violence Draft Bill;

- The Abolition of Discrimination against Women Draft Bill; and

- The Promotion of Equal Opportunities Draft Bill.

In the light of the recent release of the Government's proposed Charter of Fundamental Rights, which also contains provisions on women's rights, these

draft bills will serve to further stimulate debate on gender issues at the grass-roots level. The debate will serve to pave the way for the enactment of legislation on these important issues.

Annex

RESOLUTION ON THE NEED FOR THE RESUMPTION/COMMENCEMENT OF MULTI-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS

We, the parties, organizations and administrations assembled in this the Multi-party Planning Conference:

Aware of the responsibility we individually and collectively bear for the well-being of our country;

Believing that the problems of our country should be resolved peacefully through a process of negotiation;

Realizing the urgent need for the economic development of the country;

Agreeing that the resources of the country need to be preserved, developed and improved for the benefit of all the people of this country and for future generations;

Accepting that all the people of this country and the whole community of nations throughout the world look to us to move the country forward towards a non-racial, non-sexist and fully democratic future;

Now resolve to:

1. Commit ourselves, individually and collectively, to the resumption/commencement of multi-party negotiations within the next month, in order to move as speedily as possible towards the attainment of our primary objective, which is the drafting and adoption of a new Constitution for South Africa;

And further resolve that:

2. The multi-party forum shall be reconvened as a matter of national urgency, not later than 5 April 1993;

3. Each participating organization will send two delegates and two advisors;

4. The first meeting will determine:

   4.1 Mechanisms and procedures (including chairmanship);

   4.2 How to accommodate the views of those participants who were not in CODESA in relation to the agreements reached in CODESA;

4.3 How these agreements can serve as a constructive foundation for the resumed negotiations process to build on;

4.4 How this forum shall be structured and named;

4.5 The role of the international community.

5. The Facilitating Committee of this Conference will have the responsibility of deciding upon and implementing the steps that are necessary to give effect to this resolution;

6. All participants are required to make an unqualified commitment to this process as a prerequisite for their participation.

SURINAME

Message from Mr. Runaldo R. Venetiaan, President of Suriname

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to state, on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Suriname, that we resolutely oppose any form of inequality and any kind of discrimination. We will continue to support all efforts tc eliminate the evils of racism and racial discrimination.

We take this opportunity to reaffirm our solidarity with those who because of their race are still deprived of the most basic civil and political rights and support them in their struggle for political freedom and equality and for societies free from discrimination.

The Government and people of the Republic of Suriname reiterate their support for the continued efforts of the Special Committee against Apartheid. This Committee has never failed to draw the attention of the international community to the situation in South Africa and to generate support for the anti-apartheid forces and for victims of apartheid.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

Message from Mr. Farouk Al-Shara', Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]

On the occasion of the special meeting convened by your esteemed Committee in observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, a day which coincides with the anniversary of the horrendous Sharpeville massacre of 1960, perpetrated against defenceless civilian Africans, I am pleased to express once more our full support for the legitimate struggle of the people of South Africa to establish its fundamental rights to the total elimination of the odious system of apartheid, the establishment of democracy,

equality and freedom, self-determination and the creation of a non-racist democratic society giving the majority participation in the administration of government in South Africa, whose racist Government still represents the last stronghold of human political backwardness in this world. The time has come for the international community to intensify collective pressures on the white minority Government in Pretoria for the immediate and unequivocal repeal of the racist laws and the adoption of a new constitution for the country, with the participation of the national liberation movements in South Africa, in particular the African National Congress under the leadership of Nelson Mandela.

The recent political developments in South Africa constitute an encouraging landmark on the path towards constitutional change in South Africa. However, these developments must be translated without delay into the form of tangible legislative changes and a speedy burgeoning of democracy to consolidate the peaceful process of change. We must emphasize, on this occasion, that the elimination of policies and programmes of racial discrimination and other racist philosophies that time has spared has become a fundamental requirement for ensuring the building of the desired new world order that the peoples of the world hope will be characterized by the principles of equality, dignity and justice, so as to guarantee the right of the subjugated peoples to self-determination and remove from them the yoke of injustice and wrong.

We should never lose sight of the close relationship that exists between racial discrimination and racist settlement based on flimsy alleged motives that do not stand up to the logic of established human history. Hence the international community's condemnation of racist practices in South Africa are inseparable from its condemnation of racist settlement elsewhere in the world, particularly in the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied by Israel, in view of the grave threats which these inhumane practices present to international peace and security.

The Syrian Arab Republic takes this opportunity to salute the heroic struggle of the people of South Africa and to express its firm commitment to supporting it, in order that its full national independence may be achieved and it may enjoy the exercise of its right to self-determination. The Syrian Arab Republic is optimistic that the year 1993 will coincide with the final end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, especially since the international community is now on the watch to counter any duplicity or selectivity in the treatment of human rights anywhere in the world.

THAILAND

Message from Savadron Leader Prasong Soonsiri, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand

[Original: English]

On the solemn occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to reiterate once again, on behalf of the Royal Thai Government and the people of Thailand, our consistent stand against any type of racial discrimination, anywhere in this world.

In this connection, we welcome the long-awaited endeavour of all the parties concerned to once and for all eradicate apartheid in South Africa. Together, they have built an unprecedented momentum towards the peaceful establishment of a united non-racial democratic South Africa. In spite of continued challenges against it, this momentum must be kept alive. Time is of the essence and the opportunity must not be lost.

The light at the end of the long tunnel is now appearing increasingly stronger. I am hopeful that through the continuation of peaceful negotiations and the institution of the needed reforms, the people of South Africa will succeed. For that, they have our firm support.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Message from Mr. Ralph Maraj, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]

Today, Trinidad and Tobago joins the international community in observing the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In large part this observation is a commemoration of those tragic events at Sharpeville 33 years ago and the epic struggle against apartheid which has been waged by so many within and outside South Africa.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and the world at large, remain hopeful that the impending multi-party constitutional negotiations will mark the final stage of what has been a long, arduous and painful journey towards a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

Even as the situation in South Africa appears to be heading for an acceptable resolution, other instances of racial discrimination are imposing themselves upon our consciousness. The savage events in the former Yugoslavia as well as outbreaks of racially inspired conflict in various flashpoints across the globe serve to remind us that we must remain ever vigilant to identify and combat such discrimination wherever it occurs.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago takes this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the eradication of racial and ethnic intolerance, bigotry, hatred and xenophobia and pledges to play its part at the national, regional and international levels in the pursuit of the elimination of these potent threats to international peace and security. In that vein the Government of Trinidad and Tobago also urges the United Nations to accord highest priority to all programmes intended to combat racial and other forms of discrimination.

TUNISIA

Message from Mr. Zine El Abdine Ben Ali, President of Tunisia

[Original: Arabic]

As the international community commemorates the sixteenth anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I have pleasure in saluting, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Tunisian Government and people, the efforts of the United Nations to eradicate racial discrimination and its continuing commitment to putting a final end to this practice that conflicts with the most elementary human values and human self-respect.

Tunisia, which has ever adhered to international legitimacy, justice and human rights, reaffirms its support for the people of South Africa and for all forces of progress in that country in their legitimate struggle to establish a democratic, united and non-racial society in South Africa.

Tunisia is following with great interest the development of the situation in South Africa and is gratified at the positive developments in this country, which should promote the success of the political reform process aimed at putting a final end to the apartheid regime and establishing a just and balanced society endowed with the constituent elements of democracy and moral values and responsive to the principles laid down in international covenants. Tunisia also expresses its satisfaction and optimism at the resumption of the dialogue between the Government of South Africa and the African National Congress, in preparation for the resumption of the negotiations of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), with a view to the establishment of a democratic and non-racist State.

On the occasion of the observance of this anniversary, Tunisia urges all peace-loving States that are committed to the principles of justice, freedom and democracy to continue to do all in their power to support the political reforms in South Africa, the elimination of racial discrimination and the eradication of all forms of racism, whether in South Africa, the occupied Arab territories or Bosnia and Herzegovina, wherever human beings are suffering from injustice, oppression and discrimination, whatever their manifestations.

TURKEY

Message from Mr. Hikmet Getin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to express the support of the Turkish people and the Government of the Republic of Turkey.

The massacre of unarmed civilian Africans in Sharpeville on 21 March 1960 is a tragic event to be remembered by the international community as an occasion to express concern over racial discrimination in all its forms.

All members of the United Nations have committed themselves under the Charter of the United Nations to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms which is a sine qua non condition of establishing a peaceful international order. The positive developments both in the international scene and in South Africa itself have recently been conducive to eradicating the last vestiges of all kinds of racial discrimination.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey, through you, to the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid our deep appreciation for its determined endeavours to mobilize international action for the eradication of racial discrimination.

I also wish to state once again that the people and Government of Turkey are genuinely willing and ready to support all international efforts aimed at the elimination of all kinds of racial discrimination.

VENEZUELA

Message from Mr. Fernando Ochoa Antich, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of yet another observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government of Venezuela reaffirms once again its unqualified support for the struggle of the people of South Africa to establish a genuinely democratic and multiracial system in order to transform the country's society into one where the population can enjoy all its rights. The achievements that the international community today observes with interest are nothing less than the fruit of the tenacity of its people and the persistence of its leaders.

Venezuela would like to express its great satisfaction with the recent agreements to establish a Government of national unity which would reflect all the sectors of South African society. The prospect of the holding of elections in which 30 million citizens who have not been allowed to vote because of their ethnic origin would participate for the first time, and the establishment of a multiracial national assembly which will be responsible for drafting a new constitution, is a significant step towards the consolidation of the new egalitarian society that the majority of South Africans have been yearning for. We feel that such a situation should be duly evaluated by the international community.

Venezuela is monitoring this process particularly closely and trusts that the agreements will be irreversible and that their implementation will lead to the demise of the apartheid system and the consolidation of a democratic Government where the rights of all the inhabitants of South Africa are respected.

VIET NAM

Message from Mr. Le Duc Anh, President of Viet Nam

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) organized by the United Nations, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to you, to the African National Congress (ANC) and the people of South Africa.

During the past decades, the South African people, under the leadership of the African National Congress, have persistently and resiliently struggled to eliminate apartheid for peace, democracy and social progress in South Africa. The struggle of the South African people has obtained important achievements and is now entering into a new phase of stepped-up political negotiations, in a context of new favourable conditions, yet also many trials and obstacles for a truly democratic multi-racial South Africa where equal rights and other fundamental human rights are ensured for the South African people. The international community, always supporting and standing side by side with the South African people in this just struggle, continues to demand that the South African administration abolish apartheid completely.

Together with the progressive peoples all over the world, the people and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam reaffirm their strong and unwavering solidarity and support for the just cause of the South African people and the ANC. We firmly believe that with vigorous support from the international community, the struggle of the South African people for the complete elimination of racial discrimination will achieve total success.

ZAMBIA

Message from Mr. F. J. T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia

[Original: English]

I wish, on behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of Zambia, to commend you and the members of your Committee for your efforts towards the elimination of racial discrimination in South Africa. Indeed, on this solemn occasion, the attention of the international community should focus on the ways and means of eliminating racial discrimination in any form or manifestation in apartheid South Africa and elsewhere.

In our view, racial discrimination constitutes a denial of fundamental freedoms and civil liberties which are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948.

In 1975, the General Assembly condemned and characterized apartheid as a crime against humanity. We in Zambia abhor racial discrimination and have, since our independence in 1964, vehemently opposed South Africa's institutionalized racial policies under apartheid. We hold the view that

apartheid is an affront against the conscience of humanity. In this regard, we continue to call on the international community to remain resolute in the fight for the total eradication of apartheid until change is realized in that unhappy land.

I reaffirm Zambia's solidarity with and support for the masses who are fighting against apartheid in South Africa. We continue to call for the unconditional implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa adopted on 14 December 1989, which stipulates the steps to be taken by the South African Government in order to create conditions that are conducive for meaningful negotiations with the genuine representatives of the South African oppressed majority. In this regard, Zambia reiterates its call on the South African Government to take the necessary steps to end political violence in order to create a conducive atmosphere in which free political activity may take place. This, we believe, is a necessary confidence-building measure.

The people of South Africa have demonstrated their readiness to negotiate the demise of apartheid. It is, therefore, important that the South African Government reciprocates this gesture by engaging in negotiations in good faith. There can be no alternative to negotiations. We appeal to the leaders of the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the Inkhata Freedom Party (IFP) and all anti-apartheid forces to unite in their just struggle for the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic society in South Africa. Their unity of purpose is, more than ever before, crucial for the success of their efforts to eliminate apartheid. We appeal to them to participate in negotiations under the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) or any other acceptable forum so that the negotiations for change are brought back on track.

The role of the United Nations in the process for change in South Africa cannot be overemphasized. We believe that the United Nations should continue to monitor the situation until change is attained in that country. The attainment of peace and stability in South Africa will have far-reaching ramifications on the entire southern African region.

The indignities that have, over the years, been visited upon the South African people are deplorable. They have suffered too much for too long. They yearn for peace, justice and freedom. In their just struggle for change, they need and deserve every assistance of the international community. Indeed, their struggle is ours. We cannot fail them.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Zambia's unflinching support for the strict observance of human rights the world over. Racial discrimination is a scourge which the international community should never allow to raise its ugly head anywhere.

II. MESSAGES FROM INTERNATIONAL, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION

[Original: English]

The Women's International Democratic Federation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, joins with Governments and others who observe the thirty-third anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre. This day, which observes also the struggle for the elimination of racial discrimination, takes place at a time when South Africa is poised on the brink of establishing an interim government and the holding of democratic elections.

Although the players representing 27 South African parties have agreed to the resumption of multi-party constitutional talks in early April, nevertheless, the political situation is still fragile and volatile. The spectre of violence stands like a bull elephant threatening the tenuous negotiating climate. Many thorny and difficult issues remain to be mediated, but if the resumption of talks can give rise to the drafting and adoption of a new constitution for South Africa, then a major obstacle to a truly "new South Africa" and the formation of democratic institutions will be overcome.

The Federation recognizes the delicacy of the transitional phase but like many in the world community we share the frustration of the majority Black population of South Africa with the slow pace of constitutional talks. We are further alarmed by the escalating Black education crisis, which if not addressed immediately will rapidly degenerate into a chaotic anarchy. The need for far-reaching socio-economic and urban reconstruction to deal with the legacy of apartheid in housing, education and health care is overwhelming.

In conclusion, the Federation notes with satisfaction that in its resolution 47/77 of 16 December 1992 the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a draft programme of action for the third decade to combat racism and racial discrimination. The struggle to eliminate racism is not over. Sharpeville Day memorializes the 69 dead of 1960, but the world community's efforts to combat the virulence of racism in South Africa and elsewhere in the world must not slacken. Racism is alive and well and threatens and dehumanizes millions of people throughout Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America, Australia and New Zealand.

The 1989 far-reaching and comprehensive Declaration on South Africa of 1989 set forth some reasonable guidelines to be met if the process of dismantling apartheid can be declared "irreversible". The Republic of South Africa is almost there but the last mile is being measured in centimetres and inches. The 69 dead of Sharpeville call for a giant step. So does the world community.